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SPIDER-MAN
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PREVIOUSLY IN MARVEL KNIGHTS SPIDER-MAN

"WILD BLUE YONDER"

PART IV OF VI

Peter Parker's life has been turned upside down. His house has been leveled by a super-villain so he's moved his family into a new pad—Avengers Tower...his summer-school teaching job fell through so he's finagled a summer job at the *Daily Bugle*...the Owl has placed a bounty on his head that the Absorbing Man and his mysterious female consultant are looking to collect.

They're not the only ones gunning for blood, though. The Punisher has pulled a hit on the Absorbing Man, forcing him to shape-shift into a metal form before being killed.

If that wasn't trouble enough, Peter's wallet has been stolen. Former Avenger, Hank "Ant-Man" Pym has his six-legged buddies out scouring the city trying to track him down. Meanwhile, the *Bugle's* new star reporter, Ethan Edwards, has angled in on Peter's turf as J. Jonah Jameson's new golden boy. Ethan's revealed himself to be an aspiring super hero, latching onto Peter for training. And there's something about this corn-fed Iowa boy that doesn't sit quite right with Peter.

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ANYONE FOLLOWING US?
LADY, I'M A SEVEN-FOOT-TALL GUY MADE OUT OF STEEL, RIDING SHOTGUN IN A CAR WITH HALF THE ROOF OFF. IF THEY WANT TO FIND US, THEY WILL.
IT'S BAD ENOUGH WE HAVEN'T FINISHED ALL THE TARGETS ON THE OWL'S HIT LIST. I DON'T WANT TO BRING TROUBLE BACK TO HIS HEADQUARTERS--
OH BOY...

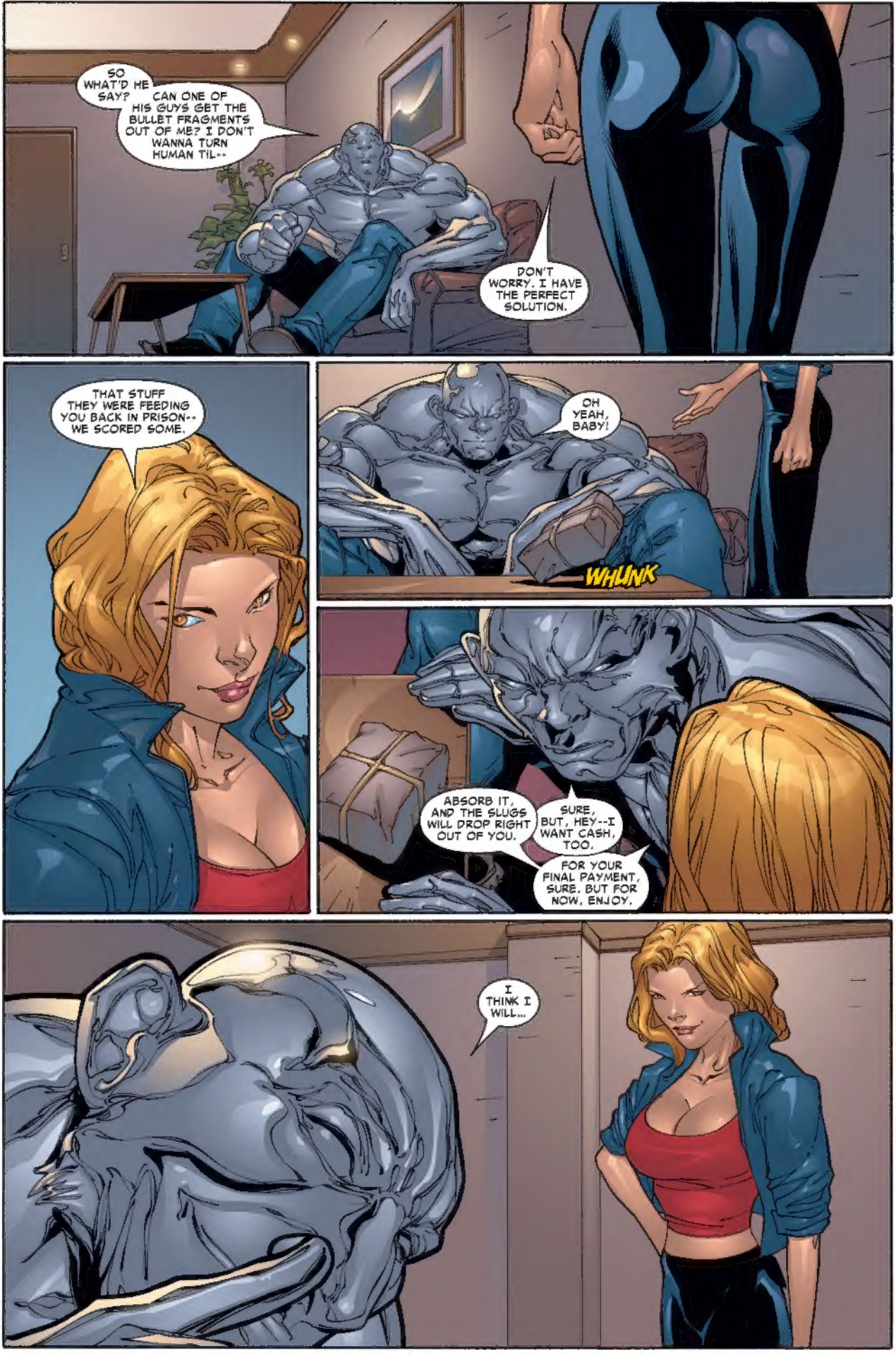
WILD BLUE YONDER PART FOUR

REGINALD HUDLIN WRITER	BILLY TAN PENCILS	JOHN SIBAL INKS 1-17	AVALON'S IAN HANNIN COLORS	MARK BUCKINGHAM PENCILS & INKS 18-21	D'ISRAELI COLORS	VC'S CORY PETIT LETTERS	STEVE MCNIVEN COVER

CORY SEDLMEIER ASST. EDITOR | AXEL ALONSO EDITOR | JOE QUESADA CHIEF | DAN BUCKLEY PUBLISHER

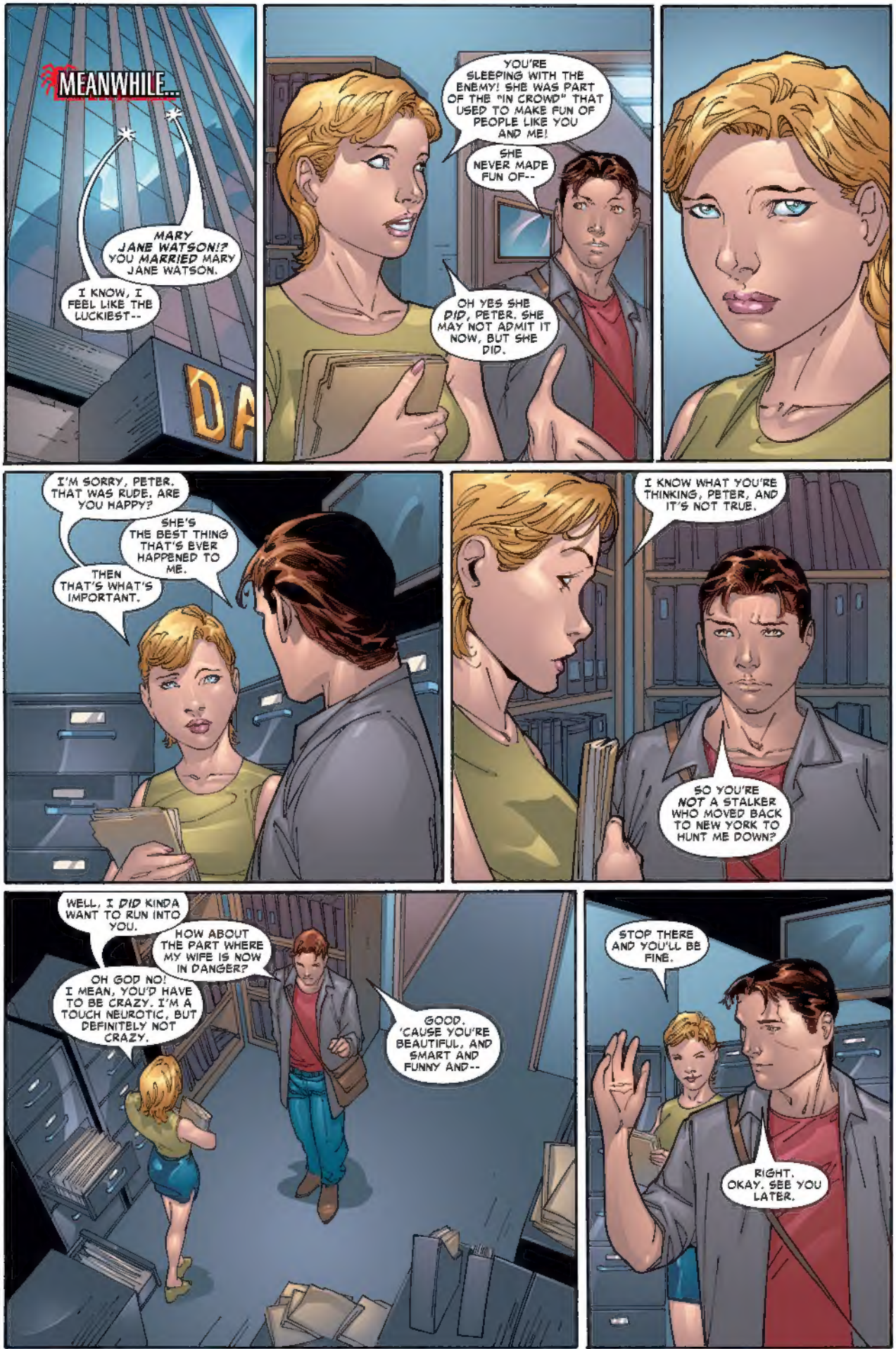
WHUMP
OOH! THAT'S GOTTA HURT!
AND SO WILL THIS.
BRATTA-TA-TATTAT
THANKS FOR MAKING IT EASY TO KNOCK YOUR BLOCKS OFF ALL AT ONCE, LOSERS!
RUN ALL YOU WANT--YOU CAN'T ESCAPE THE ABSORBING MAN!

TEN MINUTES LATER
THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE AN EASY HIT: TAKE OUT A DOZEN GUYS IN 48 HOURS.
YOU'RE A MASTER ASSASSIN TRAINED BY THE HAND... AND I PAIR YOU UP WITH A BONA FIDE HEAVYWEIGHT SUPER-FREAK. HOW'D IT ALL GO WRONG?
WE CAN STILL FINISH THIS.
NO, YOU CAN'T. YOU TOOK TOO LONG. THAT'S WHY THAT CREW OF GOOMBAS WAS OUTSIDE MY DOOR, TRYING TO TAKE ME OUT BEFORE YOU GOT TO THEM. NOW THEY'LL REALLY BE IN HIDING.
WHAT ABOUT THE CAPES? WE CAN STILL HIT THEM, RIGHT?
YOU'RE NOT HEARING ME. I HAVE TOO MUCH HEAT ON ME NOW. EVEN THE PUNISHER IS ON TO YOU GUYS. BESIDES, CAPES ARE ALWAYS HARD TO KILL. AND YOU GUYS AREN'T DOING SO WELL WITH REGULAR MOB GUYS...
THE "PARTNER" YOU STUCK ME WITH IS A...NON-PROFESSIONAL, TO SAY THE LEAST. HE'S A JUNKIE WHO'S TOO STRUNG OUT TO DO HIS JOB. WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH A LOSER LIKE THAT?
WHAT INDEED...?


SO WHAT'D HE SAY?
CAN ONE OF HIS GUYS GET THE BULLET FRAGMENTS OUT OF ME? I DON'T WANNA TURN HUMAN TIL--
DON'T WORRY. I HAVE THE PERFECT SOLUTION.
THAT STUFF THEY WERE FEEDING YOU BACK IN PRISON-- WE SCORED SOME.
OH YEAH, BABY!
WHUNK
ABSORB IT, AND THE SLUGS WILL DROP RIGHT OUT OF YOU.
SURE, BUT, HEY--I WANT CASH, TOO.
FOR YOUR FINAL PAYMENT, SURE. BUT FOR NOW, ENJOY.
I THINK I WILL...

SNNNIIIFFFFFF!
HMMM... NAP TIME...
ROOM SEALED?
POWER ON!
WAIT... WHAT ARE YOU...
WHOOOOOSH

OKAY, IT'S BEEN FIVE MINUTES. FANS OFF. START SCRAPING.
GEEZ. THERE'S ENOUGH POWDER HERE FOR EVERY JUNKIE IN NEW YORK.
THIS GANG WAR IS GOING TO BE VERY COSTLY. BUT CREEL JUST TRANSFORMED FROM AN EXPENSE TO A PROFIT CENTER. HE'LL BE THE HOTTEST PRODUCT ON THE STREET SINCE MGH.
ARE YOU GOING TO CUT IT?
OH, IT WILL BE STEPPED ON SEVERAL TIMES. LIMITED SUPPLY, YOU KNOW.
MY DEALERS HAVE CUSTOMERS LINED UP READY TO BUY. I WANT YOU TO ACCOMPANY THE DELIVERY MEN TO MAKE SURE THE DROP-OFFS DON'T GET HIJACKED.

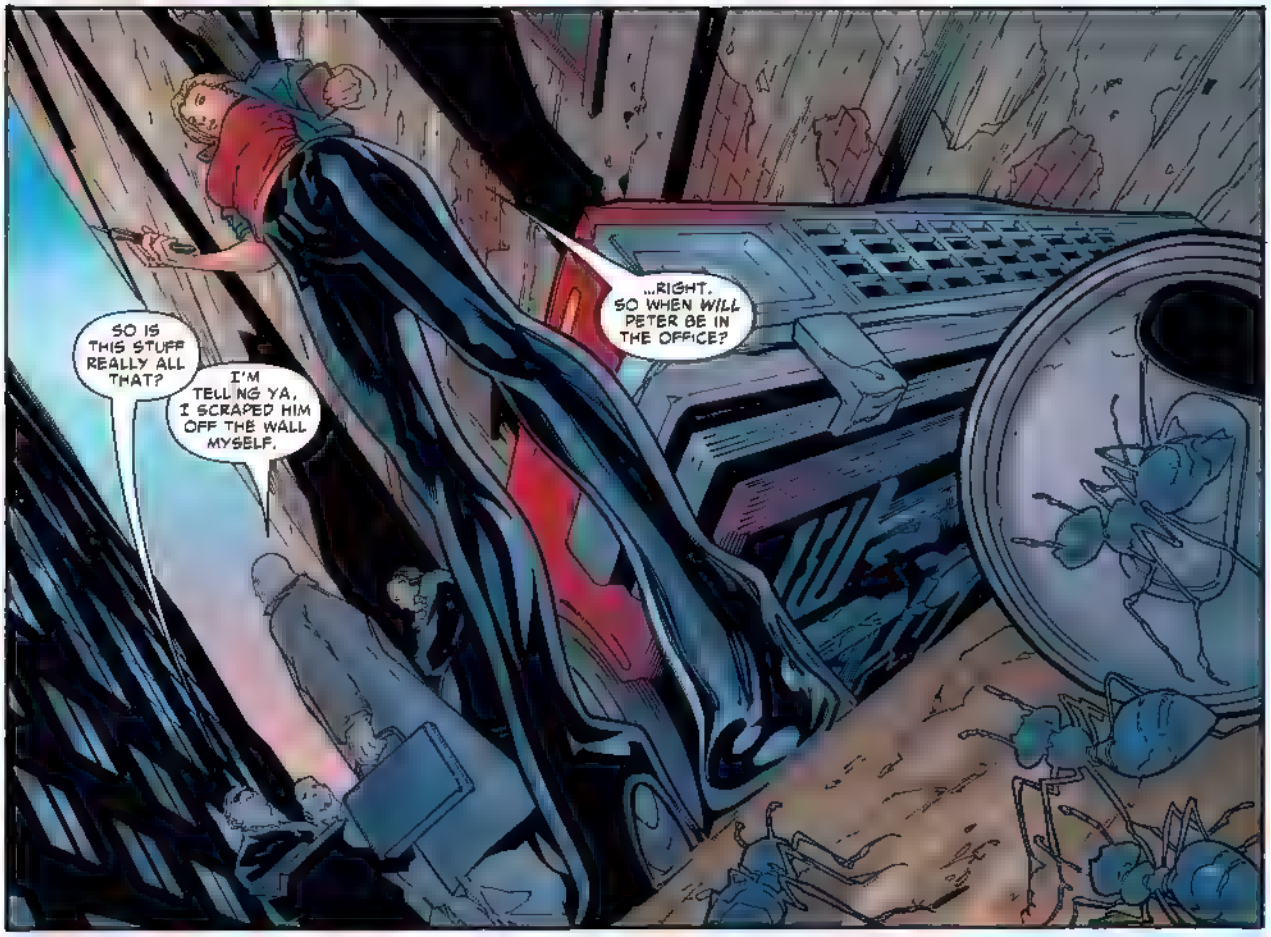

MEANWHILE...
MARY JANE WATSON!? YOU MARRIED MARY JANE WATSON.
I KNOW, I FEEL LIKE THE LUCKIEST--
YOU'RE SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY! SHE WAS PART OF THE "IN CROWD" THAT USED TO MAKE FUN OF PEOPLE LIKE YOU AND ME!
SHE NEVER MADE FUN OF--
OH YES SHE DID, PETER. SHE MAY NOT ADMIT IT NOW, BUT SHE DID.
I'M SORRY, PETER. THAT WAS RUDE. ARE YOU HAPPY?
SHE'S THE BEST THING THAT'S EVER HAPPENED TO ME.
THEN THAT'S WHAT'S IMPORTANT.
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING, PETER, AND IT'S NOT TRUE.
SO YOU'RE NOT A STALKER WHO MOVED BACK TO NEW YORK TO HUNT ME DOWN?
WELL, I DID KINDA WANT TO RUN INTO YOU.
HOW ABOUT THE PART WHERE MY WIFE IS NOW IN DANGER?
OH GOD NO! I MEAN, YOU'D HAVE TO BE CRAZY. I'M A TOUCH NEUROTIC, BUT DEFINITELY NOT CRAZY.
GOOD. 'CAUSE YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL, AND SMART AND FUNNY AND--
STOP THERE AND YOU'LL BE FINE.
RIGHT. OKAY. SEE YOU LATER.

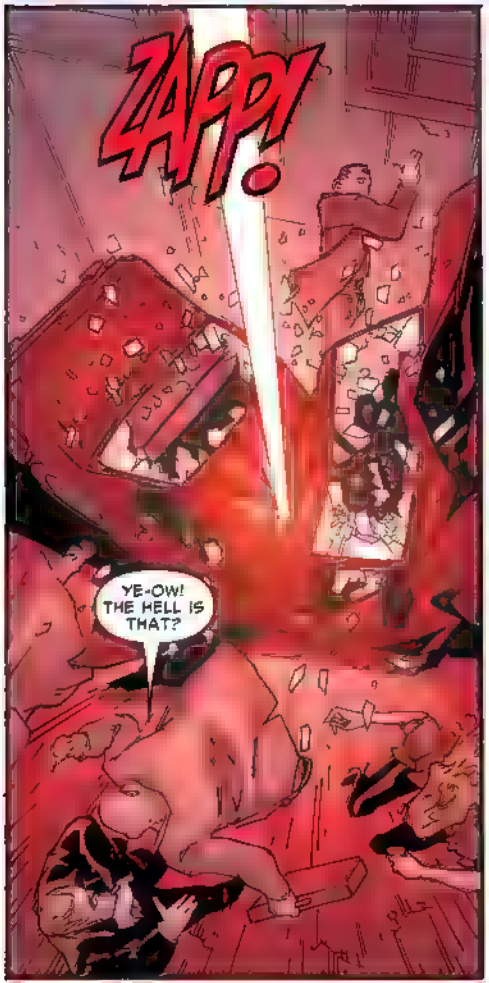
What a weird go t trip. Maybe a ittle web-s ng ng wi l shake off that--
HEEEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I KNEW I'D FIND YOU HERE.
SORRY, PETER BUT I FIGURED YOU'D WANT TO SWING NTO ACTION SOME TIME TODAY, AND I WANTED TO BE THERE, S NCE YOU CHANGED NTO COSTUME HERE LAST TIME..
I ONCE LIFTED A WHOLE GRAIN ELEVATOR.
LOOK, WE WON'T BE "SWINGING" INTO ACTION TOGETHER JNT L YOJ GET SOME PROPER TRAIN NG ETHAN DO YOU EVEN KNOW THE SCOPE OF YOUR POWERS?
+SIGH+
WHERE ARE WE GOING?
TO GET YOU TESTED PROPERLY.
AND YOU'RE SURE YOU DON'T WANT A LIFT?
YES NO MORE PIGGYBACK RIDES!

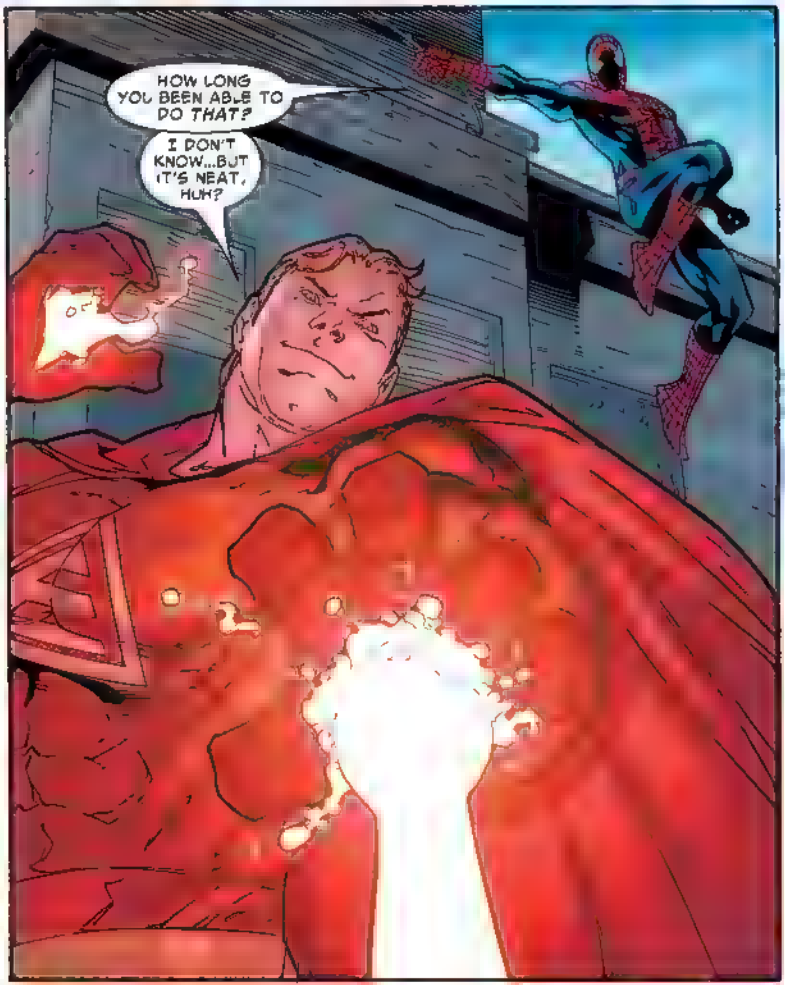
TWO MINUTES LATER
STRETCH, THERE'S SOMEBODY OUT THE WINDOW.
HEY, YOU EVER THINK ABOUT USING THE FRONT DOOR?
I'M SURE YOU LET MASKED GUYS UP TO THE TOP FLOOR ALL THE TIME.
REED, BEN, SUE JOHNNY, THIS S--
--JH, VIRTUE.
VIRTUE!
WE PROBABLY NEED TO WORK ON THAT TOO
ANYWAY, HE'S GOT SUPERPOWERS, BUT HE DOESN'T REALLY KNOW HOW--
IT'S A GIFT FROM GOD
I CATCH YOUR MEANING, SPIDER-MAN. WE'LL RUN SOME TESTS.

SOON...
GEE WHIZ, THIS IS HEAVY!
HE APPEARS TO BE IN BEN'S WEIGHT CLASS N TERMS OF STRENGTH
WATCH YOUR TONGJE THERE!
SHE'S RIGHT THERE HOLDNG UP TWO FINGERS, BEH ND HER BACK.
AMAZING! HE SEEMS TO SEE IN EVERY LIGHT SPECTRUM!
IT'S KIND OF CREEPY. I'VE NEVER FELT SO NAKED WHILE INVISIBLE. EVEN WHEN I WAS NAKED!
HE'S MATCHING THE TORCH IN SPEED MANEUVERABILITY AND DISTANCE.
AND CHARM
THE MOST AMAZING THING HE DID WAS HEAL MY NJURIES WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THAT, REED?
HE DID WHAT?
IF THIS GUY IS HEALING PEOPLE, THEN I'M FIRST N LINE.
HOLD ON, BEN. "VIRTUE" SEEMS NCE ENOUGH, BUT WE DON'T KNOW WHO HE REALLY IS OR THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF H S "HEALING"...F THAT'S WHAT IT IS...
THANKS FOR MAKING ME JNCOMFORTABLE.

AAAAAAAH
SINCE WE CAN'T GET BLOOD THROUGH YOUR INVULNERABLE SKIN, WE'LL RUN SOME TESTS ON A DNA SAMPLE.
YOU'LL SCREEN FOR MUTATIONS? COSMIC RAYS? GAMMA RADIATION? SUPER-SOLDIER SERUM? ANGEL FEATHERS? PIXIE DUST?
SPIDER-MAN?
YES?
CALM DOWN
YEAH-YEAH.
WHAT THE--?
OBJECT HAS BEEN FOUND
-HANK
HEY LOOKIT THAT YOUR BUG PALS WANT YOU TO COME OUT AND PLAY
OKAY, NOW IT'S GETTING WEIRD.
ONCE I GET THOSE TEST RESULTS, I'LL CONTACT YOU...NOT BY ANT-PHONE, BUT WE'LL DO OUR BEST.
GOOD LOOKING OUT, REED!
THANKS, MR. RICHARDS


SO IS THIS STUFF REALLY ALL THAT?
I'M TELLING YA, I SCRAPED HIM OFF THE WALL MYSELF.
...RIGHT. SO WHEN *WILL* PETER BE IN THE OFFICE?


ZAPP!
YE-OW! THE HELL IS THAT?

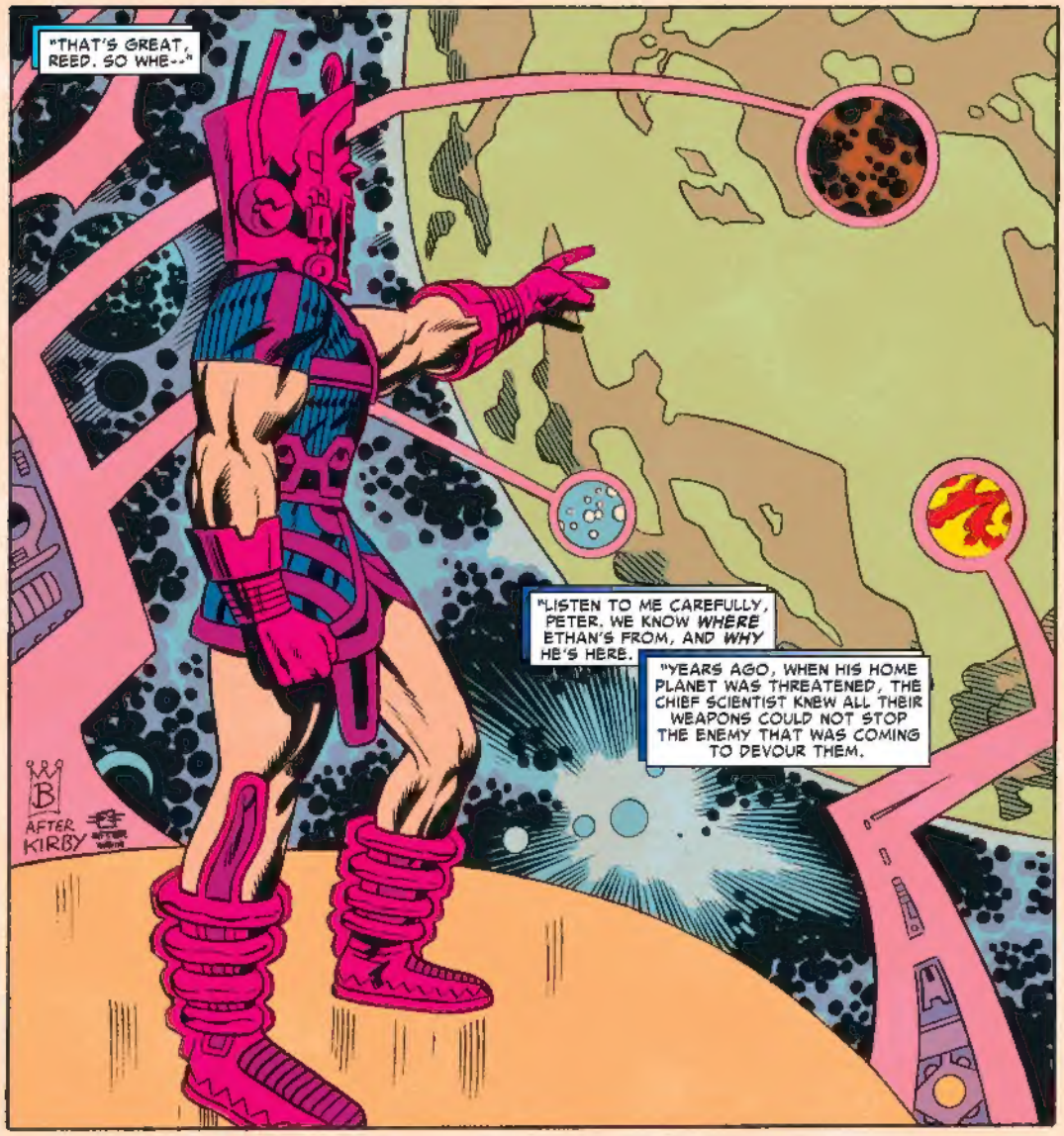

HOW LONG YOU BEEN ABLE TO DO *THAT*?
I DON'T KNOW...BUT IT'S NEAT, HUH?

I HATE DRUG DEALERS!
ME TOO LITTLE BUDDY. JUST LEAVE ENOUGH OF THEM TO TESTIFY AT THE TRIAL
HOLD ON, THERE, LITTLE LADY
I'LL TAKE THAT, THANK YOU VERY MUCH
RELEASE ME, OR ELSE I'LL TELL THE WORLD THAT YOU'RE PE--
MMMPF
THWIP
SORRY, DIDN'T CATCH THAT.
C'MON YOU THINK YOU'RE THE FIRST CROOK TO FIGURE OUT WHO I AM? DO YOU KNOW WHAT S.H.I.E.L.D. DOES TO PEOPLE LIKE YOU? A VAN WILL SHOW UP IN 15 MINUTES AND YOU'LL NEVER BE HEARD FROM AGAIN

UH, "V RTUE"...? YOU MIGHT WANT TO TAKE OFF NOW.
WHY?
YOU DON'T HAVE A MASK ON, AND THE PRESS JUST SHOWED UP.
GOOD POINT.
WHOOSH
MEET YOU ON THE ROOF LATERRRRRRRR
SPIDER-MAN. WHO WAS THAT?
WHO WAS WHO?
THE GUY IN THE FRUITY OUTFIT. IS HE A SUPER HERO? OR A CROOK LIKE YOU?
OKAY, YOU JUST OFFENDED ME THREE DIFFERENT WAYS.
YOU GUYS REALLY GO OUT OF YOUR WAY TO MAKE ME LOOK BAD, DON'T YOU?
I MEAN--
SHOOT THAT! SPIDER-MAN LET THAT CROOK GET AWAY!
Nuts. And without the spider-tracer, I can't track her anymore
Not good.
Even worse
SALE

LATER
OH MAN, THAT WAS GREAT.
NO, THAT WASN'T! YOUR FACE IS ON EVERY NEWS STATION IN THE CITY.
OH, DON'T WORRY. THAT'S WHY I WEAR THESE GLASSES. YOU DIDN'T THINK I HAD BAD VISION, DID YOU?
ETHAN, THEY'VE GOT A CLOSE-UP OF YOUR FACE. YOU'RE BUILT LIKE A LINEBACKER. YOU'RE ABOUT TO WALK INTO A NEWSROOM. YOU DON'T THINK THEY'RE GONNA FIGURE IT OUT?
NO.
DING
I TOLD YOU NO ONE WILL RECOGNIZE ME.
NO, ME!
NO, ME!
I WANT AN EXCLUSIVE!

I TOLD YOU...
LAJRIE LYNTON.
...
OH, HE'S RIGHT HERE
PARKER? THIS IS REED RICHARDS.
HOW D'D YOJ FIND ME HERE?
IF I CAN TRACK SUBATOMIC PARTICLES THROUGH THE NEGATIVE ZONE... I CAN GET YOUR WORK NUMBER. IN FACT, MY PORTABLE PHONE HAS A SPECIAL PROGRAM THAT TRACKS--
WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND SIR?
YOUR NEW FRIEND "VIRTUE"--WHERE IS HE NOW?
ETHAN? HE'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM..BEING HOUNDED BY THE PRESS AFTER BEING UNMASKED AS A WANNA-BE SUPER HERO. WHAT'S GOING ON?
I JUST FINISHED DOING THOSE TEST RESULTS ON YOUR FRIEND. VERY SURPRISING RESULTS. OBVIOUSLY A LOT OF GENETIC MANIPULATION IN HIS DNA. WHICH MADE ME CURIOUS ABOUT HIS "ARRIVAL." SO WE TOOK A LITTLE FIELD TRIP.
WHERE ARE YOU NOW?
WE'RE IN IOWA. WE UNEARTHED THE SPACESHIP THAT BROUGHT ETHAN TO EARTH
WE KNOW WHERE IT'S FROM.


"THAT'S GREAT, REED. SO WHE--"
"LISTEN TO ME CAREFULLY, PETER. WE KNOW *WHERE* ETHAN'S FROM, AND *WHY* HE'S HERE.
"YEARS AGO, WHEN HIS HOME PLANET WAS THREATENED, THE CHIEF SCIENTIST KNEW ALL THEIR WEAPONS COULD NOT STOP THE ENEMY THAT WAS COMING TO DEVOUR THEM.
AFTER KIRBY

"SO HE HATCHED A PLAN.

"HE DECIDED TO SEND HIS INFANT SON ACROSS THE GALAXY.
"TO A PLANET PRIMITIVE ENOUGH FOR THEIR SON TO CONQUER ONCE HE REACHED MATURITY.
"UNTIL THEN, HIS SHAPE-SHIFTING ABILITIES WOULD ALLOW HIM TO ALTER HIS APPEARANCE TO LOOK LIKE THE DOMINANT SPECIES ON THE PLANET.

"TO INSURE HIS SON'S SUCCESS, THIS SCIENTIST GAVE HIM POWERS EVEN GREATER THAN THE LAST WARRIOR HIS RACE HAD SENT TO THIS BACKWARD WORLD.

"PETER, ETHAN EDWARDS IS A SKRULL. HIS FATHER CREATED THE SUPER-SKRULL...

"...AND HIS SON IS HERE TO CONQUER THE WORLD!"
TO BE CONTINUED